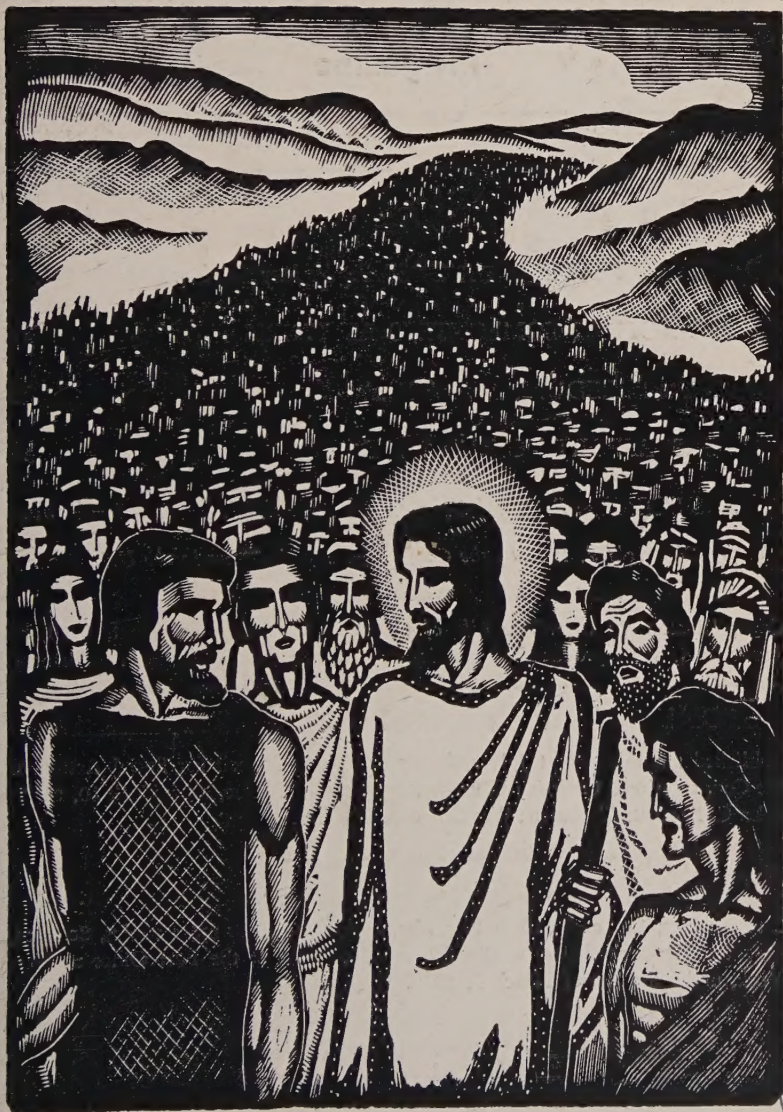


SOCIAL ACTION

15c

MARCH 15, 1946



Action to Match Our Gospel

H
PACIFIC SCHOOL
OF RELIGION

SOCIAL ACTION Magazine

LISTON POPE, *Editor*

KENNETH UNDERWOOD, *Mg. Editor*

CONTENTS

| | |
|---|-------------------|
| ACTION TO MATCH OUR GOSPEL, <i>by Ray Gibbons</i> | 3 |
| SOCIAL ACTION COMMITTEES AT WORK | 27 |
| ROAD TO FREEDOM, <i>a Book Review</i> | 29 |
| EDITORS' REPORT TO THE READER | 33 |
| SOCIAL SCENE, <i>a Personal Column, by Alfred W. Swan</i> | <i>back cover</i> |

Copyrighted, 1946 by the Council for Social Action in the U.S.

Cover Illustration: from *The Life of Christ in Woodcuts*, copyright, 1930, by James Reid, and reproduced by permission of Rinehart and Company, publishers.

SOCIAL ACTION, VOL. XII, NUMBER 3, MARCH 15, 1946

Published monthly except July and August by the Council for Social Action of the Congregational Christian Churches, 289 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, N. Y. John C. Bennett, Chairman; Ray Gibbons, Director.

Subscription \$1.00 per year; Canada, \$1.20 per year. Single copies, 15c. each; 2 to 9 copies, 12c. each; 10 to 49 copies, 10c. each; 50 or more copies, 8c. each. Re-entered as second-class matter January 30, 1939, at the Post Office at New York, under the Act of March 3, 1879.

Action to Match Our Gospel

By RAY GIBBONS

Every reader of *Social Action* has probably been asked, at some time, "Who publishes this magazine? The Council for Social Action? What kind of an outfit is that?" It may have been a friend who picked up a copy of the magazine on your table and scanned the contents. It may have been a reactionary who indignantly pounded the table as he spoke. It may have been some seeker-after-truth eagerly inquiring about this intriguing activity of the church. Being a constant reader of *Social Action* you would not have made the remark of the little woman who said, "Oh yes, I know all about social action. You know we have the *best* socials down at our church." But, you may have been rather put to it for an adequate answer to your

inquirer, and decided that as soon as you had a spare moment you would write the Director of the Council for Social Action



Ray Gibbons, director of the Council for Social Action, speaks at a Congregational Christian "social action workshop." Mr. Gibbons has served in two pastorates, one in Westbrook, Maine, the other in Northampton, Massachusetts. He was educated at Oberlin (A.B.), Union Theological Seminary (B.D.), and Columbia Teachers College (M.A.).

—Fred Swearingen

for more data on the present state of social action in the churches.

This is my answer to the two frequently asked questions, "What is the purpose of the Council?" and "How fares social action?"

DEEP ARE THE ROOTS

The roots of social action are buried deep in the Christian faith and experience of God. The purpose of the creator-redeemer God according to Jesus is to bring His erring children into true community with themselves and with Him. "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself" (II Corinthians 5:19). As His dependents we are under moral obligation to do His will and His will is that we live together as members-one-of-another in just and brotherly community. It is from this central moral and religious obligation that social action stems.

It was my original intention to support this credo by quoting from the pronouncements of the Madras or Oxford Conferences or perhaps from the encyclical *Quadragesimo Anno* by Pope Pius XI: "It is our right and duty to deal authoritatively with social and economic matters. . . ." I had intended to quote at greater length from the joint statement of Anglican, Free Church and Roman Catholic leaders of Britain: "We agree that a compelling obligation rests upon all Christian people to maintain the Christian tradition in the handling of social, economic and civil problems now and in the critical post-war period. . . ." But as I was writing there came to hand a little book just off the press, *The Faith of a Protestant*,* by W. Burnet Easton, Jr. It is typical of the many that might be quoted. In the concluding chapter on "The Basis of Social Action" the author says:

What then is the Christian motivation for social action? To answer the question we must go back again to the major Christian premise: the fact of God as revealed in Jesus Christ. This means that the most important task that you and I have is to make ourselves acceptable unto God. We make ourselves acceptable unto God by trying to do His will as revealed to us in Jesus Christ—

*New York: Macmillan, 1946.

by trying to apply the law of love in every area of life. But the motive, be it noted, is not that the areas of life will gradually become better (even though, temporarily, they do): such results we must ascribe merely to good fortune. Rather the motive is to fulfill the demands of God.

BROAD ARE THE BRANCHES

Out of this primary obligation to God has sprung every great mission movement of the Christian church. When sections of mankind were discovered which were unacquainted with Christianity, men of conviction started the foreign missionary enterprise. When the need was to lift the weight of slavery and to liberate minds held in ignorance, the movement was started for Negro freedom and education. More recently new needs appeared in man's collective relationships, in great areas of life where men are pushed around by mass movements, war, depression and racial strife. Ominous collective trends, set in motion by the machine and the industrial era, have arisen on the horizon like the black cloud of the atomic bomb. Areas which seem somewhat remote from our daily affairs, largely impersonal and rather impervious to our personal influence, are none the less important. The individual could do little to avert World War II, but that war rose with terrifying power over his life, tearing his home apart and his sons from him. Individual decision or action had little to do with producing or preventing the last depression and yet there was hardly a home which escaped its effects.

Has Christianity nothing to say about these national, economic, racial affairs? Has Protestantism no "mission" to our public life in the places where it is dominated by greed, fear, and hate? Has God withdrawn these important areas of life from the obligation to obey His laws of right and brotherhood? No, never! God claims all, even the most difficult and distant and non-personal human forces. "Go . . . teach all nations . . . to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.

Amen." (Matthew 28:19-20) The mission of social action is to help build this true community, the *Corpus Christianum*.

GREEN ARE THE LEAVES

Social action is one expression of Protestant Christianity's effort to meet the problems of an industrial era. This missionary purpose is expressed in the vote of the Oberlin General Council of the Congregational Christian Churches in June, 1934, establishing the Council for Social Action as one of its mission boards. "The purposes of the Council for Social Action shall be to help the churches to make the Christian gospel more effective in society, national and world-wide . . . in the fields of international relations, race relations, and economic statesmanship." The opening words of the charter sound the trumpet call for a new missionary movement: "Stirred by the deep need of humanity for justice, security, and spiritual freedom and growth, aware of the urgent demand within our churches for action to match our gospel, and clearly persuaded that the Gospel of Jesus can be the solvent of social as of all other problems, we hereby vote. . . ."

The closing words ring with deep conviction and personal commitment: "Believing that the church will find itself as it loses itself in the struggle to achieve a warless, just and brotherly world, we launch this venture, dedicating ourselves to unremitting work for a day in which all men find peace, security and abundant life."

No wonder that, when the vote was taken, the whole assembly rose and sang the Doxology. This was not the action of a handful of independents forming a new organization on the fringe of the church fellowship. It was the official, representative body of the churches, met in biennial convention, launching a new movement at the very heart of the life of the church. The method of launching was new, but the motivation was the age-old "social concern" which has distinguished the Christian movement from its beginning. Such social concern some have

considered characteristic of Congregationalism. Certainly it was prominent in the Pilgrims and Puritans. It is a strong ground for confidence that the denomination which founded the Council can be counted upon to support and strengthen it in the years ahead.

THE OPPOSED

"Too Controversial"

When we assess the varying response within the churches to the work of the Council we find a small number of persons definitely opposed. Some dislike discussion of "controversial" issues and do not believe such subjects should "disturb the calm surface" of church fellowship. They remind one of the two Maine hunters. On the first day one reported, "Shot a moose, today." No more was said. The second day the other remarked, laconically, "'T wa'nt a moose. 'T was a deer." The third day the first man packed to leave and the other asked, "Why?" "Can't stand this everlastin' argument around here," was the answer. Certainly the fellowship of the church is strong enough to allow full and frank discussion of differences within the common endeavor to find God's will for our world.

"Good Individuals Are Enough"

Some disapprove of social action because they believe all that is needed to change the social order is to make good individuals. Undoubtedly the integrity, commitment and conscience of the individual are primary and important, but they are not sufficient. God made us "members one of another" and we neglect our social responsibilities and our wider relationships only at our peril.

"Too Political"

Some object to the viewpoint of the Council on certain issues because vested interests are endangered or basic convictions are disturbed. Sometimes the Council is accused of partisanship, as in the following letter from a paper manufacturer:

In reply to your letter of the 4th, will say I have been disap-

pointed in the work being done by your organization and do not care to make a contribution.

Apparently, you are using the churches to support a lot of legislation being put forth by the present administration and the one preceding it. From the tone of the *Washington Report* the name of the organization should be The Council for Political Action—and I do not approve of using the churches for this purpose.

The Council does not claim infallibility and certainly does not want to “use” the churches. It *does* contend that the Churches have the obligation to make their influence felt in vital issues. As the agreed policy of the Legislative Committee states:

The Committee will respect the historic Protestant doctrine of the separation of Church and State and at the same time endeavor to bring ethical principles derived from the Christian Faith to bear upon legislative and political issues. It will also challenge individuals and groups within the Church to act in their capacity as citizens with the full consciousness of their Christian responsibilities.

THE UNINFORMED

The large majority of persons in our churches are as uninformed about the Council for Social Action as they are about the other boards and agencies of the denomination. Many have never heard of the Council, or, if they have, they have never given it a second thought. They do not see how these “general” social issues are relevant to their own personal problems. They do not feel these collective problems are particularly urgent. It may be significant that the Council was created in the midst of the great depression. Another such calamity might renew “the urgent demand within our churches for action to match our gospel.”

THE CONFUSED

Another segment of opinion is quite confused as to what can and should be done on social issues. These people wonder whether anyone, even with the finest Christian motives, can do anything effective in these areas. They reason: “Society is a

sprawling, gangling mass which you repress in one place only to find it escapes in another. Trying to destroy social evil is like the futile attempt of the oyster fishermen to destroy the starfish which fed on the oysters. They cut the starfish to pieces and threw them back only to find that each part grew to be a whole new starfish. The final result was worse than the first." Many of these skeptics have not had much opportunity to study social problems nor much help in working at complex social issues. This the Council seeks to provide through its publications, training schools and institutes.

THE ALLIES

The Humanitarians

In every church and community there are volunteer and professional social workers with a strong humanitarian concern. They work at the problems of health, delinquency and family insecurity. They often become valuable consultants on the local social action committee. Many appreciate and recognize the interdependence of social action and social service. A considerable number have found a new interest in the work of the churches through the social action program.

Other allies are those who have a single interest, such as world organization, housing or fair employment, and cooperate in the work at the point of their special interest. They make valuable contributions within their particular field and quite frequently broaden their horizons when working with a church social action group.

The Reformers

More difficult allies are those who operate upon an inadequate emotional base—the "Reformers, Inc." People with the "martyr complex" or with "messianic" delusions are like pepper in the stew—useful in small quantities but ruinous in large. Certainly the main work must be carried by persons of broad outlook and emotional stability who do not confuse the problems of society with their own personal problems. Above

all, staying-power is essential to social action and this needs constant renewal in private and public worship and in the fellowship of the church. The words of our Lord, "Except ye abide in Me," are especially true of social action.

THE MOST CONVINCED

Church Leaders

The social action movement has a tremendous appeal to church leaders. Many of the ministers have been strongly influenced by the so-called "social gospel movement" led by Washington Gladden, Walter Rauschenbusch and others. Fortunately the Council is not dependent upon the "social gospel" theology, though it is basically concerned with the social implications of the Gospel, and it has been able to find deep rootage in "neo-Protestant" thinking of men such as Reinhold Niebuhr. Many leaders have been strongly influenced by pacifism or socialism, but again, the Council is not committed to any "ism" and has sought to be a discriminating critic of "isms" rather than a protagonist. The vote of the Oberlin General Council explicitly states, "The Council will aim to be impartial, its only bias being that of the Christian view of life." By and large the leadership of the churches has warmly supported the program of the Council and many of the leaders of theological thought have been active in its work.

Quite a number of churches have given the social action committee official status in the church. Others have occasional testimonial dinners for outstanding social action work. All this encourages participation. There is not much danger of making social action too "respectable" by giving it a little prestige, and the General Council itself has contributed to this prestige by giving the Council for Social Action an important place in the denominational organization.

The Response of Laymen

Social action has a strong appeal to many of the rank-and-file members of the churches. It appeals to them as very "practical"

religion. It deals with economic and political questions such as employment, prices, wages, laws and treaties. The Rev. Douglas Horton, minister of the General Council, calls social action "the laymen's gospel." It seeks to apply Christianity to the market place, mine, factory and farm. Many laymen feel this is important. One lawyer writes, "I don't agree with every position taken by the committee, but I feel that such opinions should be expressed and considered and that there is no better agency to give expression to them than yours."

The following unsolicited letter indicates the prevalent attitude:

DEAR MR. GIBBONS:

Enclosed is \$2.00. Will you please send the *Together* issue on Detroit and labor (January 1st I believe) to the people listed below. That issue is the most fair and impartial handling of the whole labor picture that I have found.

I wonder if I could become a "representative" for *Social Action* and *Washington Report*. My husband is an industrial engineer and therefore we move to a new community every year or two.

It has been my experience that most congregations aren't even aware of the existence of this splendid literature. I would like to be able to bring it to their attention and take subscriptions. However I am always a "new" member of a congregation and I feel reluctant to take the initiative in this manner unless I have some special authority from you.

I have an AB in Sociology and did 9 years graduate work in Political Science. Naturally I am very interested in your work. I have pledged \$20 to *Social Action* and expect to increase my pledge in June. Your work is so desperately important.

The Contestants

The Council does not expect to influence the contest of forces in public life by sitting on the sidelines and shouting. It recognizes the necessity of active participation in power

struggles. It does not rely wholly upon persuasion and education as ways of effecting social change and minimizing group conflicts but also uses such pressure and political techniques as are consonant with religious principles. This puts real "resolution" into many voted "resolutions." For example, the Colorado Conference of Congregational Christian Churches passed a resolution opposing the proposed amendment to the state constitution which would prohibit Japanese from owning property in that state. The Council for Social Action cooperated with a state citizens' committee, representing several denominations. This committee brought the issues to the attention of the people through radio, leaflets, newspapers and speeches. The amendment was defeated by a margin of three per cent. It took more than "resolutions" to defeat the active opposition of the race-hating forces. It took "action to match our gospel."

"A Colony of Conviction"

Strong action does not await official approval by the whole church. Rather, it depends upon "a colony of conviction" within a church or churches banded together for action. It is amazing what such a group can accomplish. Such groups can invigorate our democracy and bring moral and religious principles to bear upon the practices of society. Through participation in such group activities, Christian citizens become effective.

SIZING UP THE COUNCIL

Throughout the country there are evidences of a healthy growth in the number of ministers, members and churches participating in the program. The number of local social action committees, subscribers to the publications, contributors to the financial support, attendants at conferences and institutes has steadily grown. The number of persons who want to work with the Council in voluntary or employed status is surpris-

ing. The Council has a long way yet to go but definite progress has been made in its first dozen years.

We have examined the roots of social action and found them deep; the branches, and found them broad; the foliage, and found it green. There is still another test to apply to the tree. Is it sound? If we bore into the trunk do we find it pithy or hard, hollow or solid?

In the June, 1945 issue of *Social Action* entitled "Preachers Under Pressure," the editor, Professor Liston Pope of Yale Divinity School, proposed a list of questions by which a minister may test the character of an agency seeking his support. Suppose we apply his check list of questions to the Council itself.

1. "Is adequate information furnished concerning the organization and its program, so that a commitment to it may be made with confidence?"

a) *Are the purposes clearly stated?*

The purposes of the Council were voted by the Oberlin General Council and have been widely publicized by full publication in the denominational *Yearbook*.

The purposes of the Council for Social Action shall be to help the churches to make the Christian gospel more effective in society, national and world-wide, through research, education and action, in cooperation with the Home and Foreign Boards, Conferences and Associations, and local churches. It is proposed that the Council shall increasingly co-operate with the Federal Council of Churches in the creation of a program which shall be genuinely inter-denominational. In its *research*, the Council will aim to be impartial, its only bias being that of the Christian view of life; its *educational* efforts will be directed primarily toward the local churches but will also envisage the cultivation of public opinion; in *action*, the Council may, on occasion, intercede directly in specific situations.

In June, 1944 a *Chart for Social Action* was adopted by the Council for Social Action which stated its aims for the years 1944-46. This six-page leaflet contained concise formulations

of principles in the areas of international affairs, domestic politics, economic affairs, rural life, international relations, family, school and the church. It is intended that this Chart will be revised and widely distributed every two years.

The *Social Action Guide-book* was published in January, 1945. It outlines the current program of the Council in each area of committee responsibility and provides much other useful information about the Council's personnel and organization. The Legislative Committee at Washington, D.C., has a full policy statement which is available so that all may know its purposes, methods, rights and limitations. Finally, the Council regularly reports its work to the General Council. Some have sought to soften the name of the Council to "Social Affairs" or "Social Education," but the flag has been nailed to the masthead so that all may see—"Council for Social Action."

b) *Are the persons identified?*

The persons on the staff and board are readily identified. Seven of the eleven full-time staff members are ordained ministers holding Bachelor of Divinity degrees, and one holds an LL.B. from Harvard Law School. Four hold Masters degrees or their equivalent; two are completing their work for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy; one is an honorary Doctor of Divinity. Two of the three part-time employees are ordained ministers, one a Doctor of Philosophy and professor of social ethics at a theological school, one is completing his

STAFF OF THE COUNCIL FOR SOCIAL ACTION

Director—Rev. Ray Gibbons
Church Counsellor—
Rev. John B. Hanna
International Relations—
Rev. Vernon H. Holloway
Industrial Relations—
Mr. Frank W. McCulloch
Legislative—Rev. Thomas B. Keehn
Mrs. Leslie Falk
Social Action—
Prof. Liston Pope, Editor
Rev. Kenneth Underwood,
Managing Editor
Service Committee—
Rev. James C. Flint
Mr. Gordon Halstead
Mr. Jeremiah Edwards
Miss Gladys Lillie
Rural—Rev. Shirley Greene
Japanese American—
Rev. Clarence Gillett

work for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy and the third has done considerable graduate research work. Seven of the nine clergymen have held two or more pastorates. Three of the staff are now teaching in seminaries.

The eighteen members of the Council, elected for terms of six years only, come from twelve states. There are four pastors, three theological seminary professors, three lay women, one college president and one dean, two leaders in the student movement, one lawyer, one doctor, and two manufacturers. Labor and farmers are not represented at present. The names of the Council members are printed conspicuously in the publications of the Council.

c) *Are the sources of financial support publicized?*

The chief sources of financial support are the regular benevolence giving of the Congregational Christian Churches. The requested allotment for the Council is four per cent but not all churches and individual conferences follow the recommendations and the actual proportion the Council receives is about two and seven-tenths per cent. In accordance with the denominational plan, individuals are encouraged to make additional contributions in the Council's "month of emphasis." In 1945, over 440 persons contributed \$3,530.81. The program for Japanese Americans and the work of the Service Committee have been supported by the Committee for War Victims and Services (now the Committee for War Victims and Reconstruction). For the full statement of income and expenditures for the fiscal year June 1, 1944 to May 31, 1945 see the auditor's report on page 16.

d) *Are the publications accurate?*

Social Action has earned the reputation for accurate, authoritative treatment of issues. Sometimes two sides are presented as in the issue, "Pro and Con of Compulsory Military Training" (*Social Action*, September, 1945). In the issue "Preachers Under Pressure" (*Social Action*, June, 1945) the programs of both the N.A.M. and the P.A.C. were surveyed.

THE COUNCIL FOR SOCIAL ACTION
OF THE CONGREGATIONAL AND CHRISTIAN CHURCHES

STATEMENT OF CASH RECEIPTS AND DISBURSEMENTS
AND COMPARISON WITH BUDGET
FOR THE YEAR ENDED MAY 31, 1945

| | | | | Increase or * Decrease of Actual Over Budget |
|--|---------------|---------------|---------------|---|
| <u>Receipts</u> | <u>Actual</u> | <u>Budget</u> | <u>Budget</u> | |
| <u>Budget Receipts</u> - Contributions (Apportionment) | \$ 49,792.66 | \$47,320.00 | \$ 2,472.66 | |
| Literature | 456.27 | 750.00 | 293.73 | * |
| Social Action | 8,803.05 | 6,500.00 | 2,303.05 | |
| Miscellaneous | 456.60 | 800.00 | 343.40 | * |
| Total Budget Receipts | \$ 59,508.58 | \$55,370.00 | \$ 4,138.58 | |
| <u>Non-Budget Receipts</u> - | | | | |
| Committee for Japanese Evacuation | 20,059.85 | | | |
| World Study and World Order | 1,050.86 | | | |
| Service Committee | 83,720.78 | | | |
| Interracial Embassy | 25.00 | | | |
| Washington Report | 3,465.75 | | | |
| Total Non-Budget Receipts | \$108,322.24 | | | |
| Total Receipts | \$167,830.82 | | | |
| <u>Disbursements</u> | | | | |
| <u>Budget Disbursements</u> - | | | | |
| General Administration (Schedule "2") | 36,366.80 | 40,255.00 | 3,888.20 | * |
| Publicity Missions Council | 6,426.76 | 6,200.00 | 226.76 | |
| Publication - Social Action | 9,090.76 | 7,850.00 | 1,240.76 | |
| Publications other than Social Action | 1,757.04 | 1,650.00 | 107.04 | |
| Field Service | 845.61 | 1,000.00 | 154.39 | * |
| Contingent | 771.91 | 1,415.00 | 643.09 | * |
| National Peace Conference | 100.00 | 100.00 | -- | |
| Institute of International Relations and Miscellaneous | 250.00 | 250.00 | -- | |
| Grant to Merom | 1,233.35 | 1,000.00 | 233.35 | |
| General Council Expense | 35.50 | 200.00 | 164.50 | * |
| Allowance for Committee Expenses | 546.01 | 2,000.00 | 1,453.99 | * |
| Total Budget Disbursements of Expenses | \$57,423.74 | \$61,920.00 | \$ 4,496.26 | * |
| Payment against \$2,583.35 Loan Outstanding at June 1, 1944 (Missions Council) | 1,000.00 | 1,000.00 | -- | |
| Total Budget Disbursements | \$58,423.74 | \$62,920.00 | \$ 4,496.26 | * |
| <u>Non-Budget Disbursements</u> - | | | | |
| Comm. on Japanese Evacuation (Sch. "3") | 16,135.79 | | | |
| Service Committee | 84,459.23 | | | |
| Washington Report | 2,273.52 | | | |
| World Study & World Order | 2,297.56 | | | |
| Interracial Embassy | 12.31 | | | |
| Total Non-Budget Disbursements | \$105,228.41 | | | |
| Total Disbursements | \$163,652.15 | | | |
| Excess of Receipts over Disbursements | 4,178.67 | | | |
| Cash Bal. & \$50 Travel Deposit 6/1/44 | 9,823.92 | | | |
| Balance at June 1, 1945: | \$ 14,002.59 | | | |
| Nat'l City Cash-Regular CSA | \$8,323.58 | | | |
| " -Japanese Com. | 5,059.36 | | | |
| Petty Cash Fund | 200.00 | | | |
| Cash Advanced to Workers | 369.65 | | | |
| Air Line Deposit with | | | | |
| Gen'l Council | 50.00 | \$14,002.59 | | |

S. ERWIN REQUA
CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANT

It is seldom possible to give all sides of every question but great care is taken to give a fair, accurate and cogent statement of the views presented. At the present writing (February, 1946) the subscriptions are at the all-time high of 5,768. Reprints of some issues run from 50,000 to 85,000 copies.

In the *Washington Report* the opinions expressed generally represent the viewpoint of the Council as published in its *Chart for Social Action*. They are not official statements of the Congregational Christian Churches but the judgments of the twelve church members on the Washington Legislative Committee. The *Washington Report* gives regular, factual, non-partisan information on crucial legislation and political developments in the nation's capital. At the end of its first 18 months of publication there are 4,432 subscribers.

2. "To what degree is the organization amenable to democratic control?"

a) *How is responsibility distributed?*

Responsibility rests in the elected Council of eighteen members which in turn is responsible to the General Council of the Congregational Christian Churches. The Council appoints the Director who is re-

sponsible for general oversight of the program and represents the Council to the churches and public. With the approval of the Council, he selects the staff. Each secretary specializes in one department of work such as International Relations, Legisla-



tion, Japanese American Relocation, Rural Life, Industrial, Service Committee, local church social action or editing the magazine. In each major area, staff members work with committees composed of twelve to twenty specially competent persons, ministers, laymen and women. The committees are dis-

tributed geographically as follows: The Service Committee and International Relations Committee meet in New York City; the Legislative, in Washington, D.C.; the Japanese American, in Los Angeles; the Rural Life, in Merom, Indiana; the Industrial, in Chicago; and the Intercultural, in Boston.

b) *From whom does it seek membership?*

The Council seeks active cooperation of the members of the supporting churches. It has been most successful in reaching professional people but it is directing more of its attention to reaching businessmen, farmers and industrial workers.

c) *Does the organization deal fairly?*

Although there has been unfortunate misunderstanding on this point, the Council has carefully avoided speaking "for" the denomination. It speaks "for" itself and "to" the denomination except when it has been definitely instructed to speak for a church or conference. The Council operates on a voted budget and has steadily retired a small debt incurred in its early existence.

d) *Does it treat members equally?*

Individual church members are free to voice opposition through the denominational periodicals or on the floor of the General Council. Conceivably a determined minority might marshall enough votes to abolish the Council, but an early

MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

Term Expiring 1946

John C. Bennett, *Chairman*
Professor, Union Theological Seminary
Robert L. Calhoun, *Professor*
Yale Divinity School
Stanley B. Crosland, *Pastor*
Chicago, Ill.
Mrs. William A. Gordon
Noroton, Conn.
Wilmer J. Kitchen, *Executive Secretary*
N.E. Student Christian Movement
Robert A. Roessel, *Lawyer*
Webster Groves, Mo.

Term Expiring 1948

Malcolm Dana, *President*
Olivet College, Michigan
Frank H. Korab, *Businessman*
Kansas City 2, Kans.
T. K. Lawless, *Physician*
Chicago, Ill.

Term Expiring 1950

Mrs. Max Mason
San Marino, Calif.
Frederick M. Meek, *Pastor*
Des Moines 12, Iowa
Raymond B. Walker, *Pastor*
Portland, Ore.

Term Expiring 1950

William J. Faulkner, *Dean*
Fisk University
Edward Hawley
Pilgrim Fellowship Representative
Mrs. Orville Jones
Columbus, Ohio
Joe Moody, *Businessman*
Los Angeles, Calif.
Victor Obenhaus, *Professor*
Chicago Theological Seminary
Albert J. Penner, *Pastor*
Holyoke, Mass.

effort to do so failed and no recent attempts have been made. State and local social action committees are free to determine their program without interference or control from the national agency. Careful consideration is given any group or individual who registers a complaint. Sometimes the petition of a single person may become the basis for a special appeal to the churches, the government or some other group.

e) *Is it difficult to withdraw?*

Local churches and conferences have at times withdrawn part or all of their support from the Council. These have not been penalized in any way and continue to receive all communications and services.

3. *"Is the organization realistic in form and program?"*

a) *Is the form of organization suited to its tasks?*

In several important respects the organization of the Council is well-suited to perform the tasks for which it was established. Its position in the denomination gives it steady support so that the staff members do not spend much time in raising money. The Council has a place on the conference programs and representation on the denominational committees. And yet it has been given sufficient



freedom so that it is able to do most of the things which an agency wholly independent of the denomination could do. Conceivably its position inside the denomination might cramp its style or hinder its work. The time may come when a "gad-fly" group will be needed to goad the Council to more fearless action, but in the first dozen years no such group has been formed.

b) *Is the program implemented realistically?*

RESEARCH: The program of the Council is based upon firsthand experience, consultation with experts and agencies specializing in the field, and prolonged study of history, social movements and religion. Usually the program draws heavily upon the best research which others have done but occasionally original research is undertaken, as in the survey of Indiana rural churches.

COMMITTEE WORK: All program suggestions are carefully considered by the committee responsible before they are undertaken. The committees may publish educational pamphlets, make special appeals to the churches, or take direct action in their own name. If the program is wide in scope or involves basic policies the committees seek the endorsement of the Council. Acting in this way the International Relations Committee launched the campaign to study and support the United Nations Organization.

DEMONSTRATION CENTERS: Another way in which the Council implements its program is through demonstration centers. One of these is the James Mullenbach Industrial Institute in Chicago, which conducts training courses for union leaders, runs a speakers' bureau for churches and unions, and plans programs which interpret the church to labor and labor to the churches. The second institute, at Merom, Indiana, is a rural church center for research, education, community service and rural church development. It operates throughout the seventy-mile area of the Merom basin.

LIAISON: The Council extends its influence through active cooperation with other groups. When the atomic scientists began to go to Washington to arouse the public and the government, our staff members gave them every encouragement. They were invited to speak at our Washington Seminars, churches and conferences. We cooperated in the formation of a National Committee on Atomic Information composed of representatives of labor, education, civic and church groups.

At the same time, the *Washington Report* informed its readers of important legislative developments. The International Relations Committee sent special communications to the President and Secretary of State, urging a policy of international control. It sent to every pastor a copy of the pamphlet written by the International Relations Secretary, *The Atomic Bomb—A World Problem*. Similar relations are developed with agencies working for housing, jobs and security, relief, and world organization.

FIELD WORK: Another illustration of well-directed pressure is the work for Japanese Americans. In West Coast communities, committees have been formed to foster attitudes favorable toward returning evacuees. Our Japanese American Committee has given counsel and assistance to the resettlers and not the least of its services has been to represent their interests to the government.

The Service Committee began its work in the summer of 1943. It has sent trained workers to Greece, Italy, England



Mrs. Chase Going Woodhouse, Congresswoman from Connecticut, addresses a session of one of the Washington Seminars conducted by the Legislative Committee of the Council for Social Action. The Seminars help prepare Christian citizens for fuller responsibility in the nation's political life.

and France. Under its direction, tens of thousands of new garments have been made by the women of the churches. It operates warehouses in both New York and Boston to facilitate the collection and shipment of new and used garments. It is an operating agency with a budget of more than \$100,000.

GRASS-ROOTS CULTIVATION: The Council helps the churches "to make the Christian gospel more effective in society" by encouraging the formation and functioning of local social action committees. Its most recent staff member is a Church Counsellor whose primary responsibility is to foster the growth of social action in the local church. The social action front runs through the local church and it is there most people will have a chance to do something constructive in the program.

STATE COMMITTEES: All the state conferences have committees to promote the work of social action among the churches of their state and to cooperate with the national agency. Most of them are severely limited by lack of funds and executive leadership. In a few states the Council of Churches has a full-time secretary for social action. Perhaps some day there will be as many such secretaries as there now are for religious education. In spite of severe handicaps many committees do significant work with very limited resources.

THE NEWSLETTER: The Council publishes a four-page newsletter, *Together*, which is sent without charge to all pastors and members of social action committees. It carries reports from the field, editorials and program suggestions. One recent issue contained a report of the Detroit strike, an investigation made by two members of the staff. Another gave reports on intercultural work and offered suggestions for Race Relations Sunday and Brotherhood Week.

4. "How is the organization related to other groups and to the public good?"

a) What result would success have?

The groups that would profit most by the success of the Council's program are not largely represented in the member-

ship of the supporting churches—racial minorities, low-income groups and war victims. Other groups likely to benefit from the program, either directly or indirectly, are farmers, industrial workers, small businessmen and professional people.

One evidence of success is the recognition accorded the Council by some members of Congress. In an address before the House of Representatives, December 7, 1945, on the subject of Full Employment, the Honorable George E. Outland of California said, "This point has been especially well stated by the Council for Social Action of the Congregational Christian Churches," and again,



"As the Council for Social Action of the Congregational Christian Churches said in an official statement, 'History shows that our speculative booms and succeeding depressions are the direct results of lack of planning and controls.'"

b) *Will the program check other organizations?*

The success of social action would check race-baiting groups and those powerful economic pressures which aim at securing special advantages for the few. The Council opposes both isolationist and imperialistic tendencies in our national life, both fascist and communist forces which seek to gain control of public opinion and seize the government. Within the churches it resists tendencies to exclude or segregate persons because of race or economic status and it opposes those movements which fortify reactionary tendencies among middle-class people.

c) *Do other organizations offer more promise?*

The Council works in close cooperation with the Board of Home Missions in the areas of rural, industrial and Jap-

anese American work. At one time there was a move to make the Council a part of the home missions program, but it is better able to do its international, legislative and relief work if it is free to operate independently as a "spear-point," mobile unit. In this way it can exert effective pressure on public policies and programs.

Interdenominational programs offer greater promise than denominational in some areas of social action. Legislation is an example. It is the policy of the Council to make its legislative work interdenominational as rapidly as possible. At the present time other groups cooperate as far as they are able and encourage the Council to pioneer.

d) *What consequences will arise from failure?*

Failure of the Council would encourage the spread of partisan, visionary or obscurantist movements in and outside of the churches.

5. *Is the program timely?*

a) *Can it succeed in the near future?*

The Council works at the "plastic points" in society—public opinion, national policy, social practice and legislation. It directs its attention to goals attainable in the near future, such as the United Nations Organization, rather than toward goals which cannot be realized in the foreseeable future, such as One World Government. In race relations it works for Japanese American resettlement and removing unfair discriminations. In economic affairs it works for price control, housing, full employment, minimum wages and social security. In general, it seeks to affect the future by working for intermediate steps now.

b) *Is the program flexible?*

The organization and program of the Council are exceedingly flexible. In the war years the Council adapted its program to work at the problem of Japanese American relocation. To meet the need for overseas relief it established the Service Committee. In order to strengthen democratic pro-

cedure and bring the influence of the churches to bear upon government, the Council began the publication of an information sheet, the *Washington Report*, and initiated three-day seminars at Washington for first-hand reconnaissance by church leaders.

6. *Can the program be supported in consonance with one's religious faith and moral integrity?*

a) *What is your ultimate philosophy?*

If your ultimate philosophy of life is that a person's responsibility stops with his face-to-face relationships; if you think that religion consists solely in preparation for the next world



—Fred Swearingen

While attending a Connecticut social action conference for ministers and laymen, Rev. Leslie Rowe (left), pastor of the Southbury Federated Church, and Armond Ornurius, chairman of the church's Social Action Committee, select literature on contemporary social problems. Rev. Carl Hansen (right), Associate Superintendent of Connecticut, aids them.

and that neither God nor man can do much about this one, then you will not find social action consonant with your faith. If, on the other hand, you believe that God is working through human history, that He cares about the corporate life of man as well as his private life, and if you feel that the church has a mission to call men to repentance, to minister to the needy, and to found society upon moral and religious principles, then you will find social action an enterprise to which you can give yourself with great enthusiasm. Then it is not only consonant with your ultimate philosophy but an immediate application of it. It is doing God's will for His world, now.

b) *Does it distort religion?*

Social action would distort religion if it neglected or denied the primacy of personal religious loyalties and the individual's social responsibility. It is not likely that the fruit of Christian faith will call itself the root. Nor is it likely that social action will distort the church, "using" the church to accomplish some social reform. Rather it tries to awaken, quicken and equip the church for wise and willing participation in the social struggle. The churches run a greater danger of being "used" by secular, reactionary forces—and particularly when they are least aware of it.

When we express our conviction that social action is obeying God's urgent demand upon us and our society we are not claiming that any particular program, organization or movement is itself "ultimate." We are not competent to determine that. God alone judges. In His sight all human undertakings, including social action, are woefully inadequate.

And God alone sustains. Confident that He will preserve and improve whatever good there is in social action, we undertake and continue the most difficult and hazardous tasks with patience and persistence. It is such faith which the churches declared in the concluding words of the vote establishing the Council for Social Action—"we launch this venture, dedicating ourselves to unremitting work for a day in which all men find peace, security and abundant life."

Social Action Committees at Work

Upon the initiative and inventiveness of local church committees depends in great part the future of the social action movement in American Protestantism. The report of the Social Action Committee of the University Congregational Church, Seattle, Washington reveals how effectively a church can express its social faith in less than a year's time.



First, the deacons of the church appointed a temporary committee of eight laymen to "consider the field of Social Action in our church in light of the Oberlin Pact [see page six of this issue] and to bring a report of its findings to the annual meeting of the church."

The committee met faithfully for ten months and came to an agreement on these points:

- (1) *Christian leadership*: That the world needs far more Christian influence, as it struggles with its problems, than is now apparent.
- (2) *Informed people*: That it is the duty of Christian people to inform themselves as to the facts surrounding important issues of the day.
- (3) *Individual service*: That each Christian person should find some way in which to work effectively for human betterment.
- (4) *A Social Creed*: That there are Christian principles underlying the problems of life upon which we can all agree. We should define these.
- (5) *Tolerance*: That the methods by which these principles can be made to function are the matters for honest difference of viewpoint. None of us knows all truth.
- (6) *Group action*: That groups of people of similar convictions as to method should band together for group action, but that several groups might approach a given problem from entirely different angles within any one church.

The Committee also presented a report of what eight mem-

bers working together as a mediating agency of the church can accomplish. The committee sent out a questionnaire to all church members for their opinion on the functions of the Social Action Committee, "believing that a full and free statement from our membership is important and will strengthen any growth of work." The Committee organized a "phone phalanx" to get out the church vote, "believing voting responsibility to be the obligation of all Christian people." The committee sponsored Christmas-giving to Japanese American children in relocation centers, "believing that such a gesture accents Christian fellowship." The committee established closer contact with the Federated Council of Churches, so that it might know the Council's stand on current issues, "believing it important to know in what ways Church people are being represented in this central organization." And, finally, the Committee developed a series of forums on current issues—"issues in which some Christian principles seemed involved." At these forums at least two independent viewpoints were presented as to how objectives might be reached. The Church members were impressed by the report and the temporary Social Action Committee became permanent.

The Committee on "The Church and Public Issues" of the Church in the Highlands, White Plains, New York, made an extensive survey of the way its membership was currently dealing with public issues, of the roots of its own social faith, of the resources available in the denomination and the community to aid it, of the areas it wished to concentrate on during its first year of activity, and of the changes to be made in the by-laws if the Church was not only to educate but to act forthrightly and effectively on public issues.*

These programs and those of hundreds of similar Social Action Committees can be duplicated in churches over America. The Council for Social Action exists as your clearing house of ideas for Christian social witness.

*Write to the Council for Social Action for a free copy of this report.

ROAD TO FREEDOM

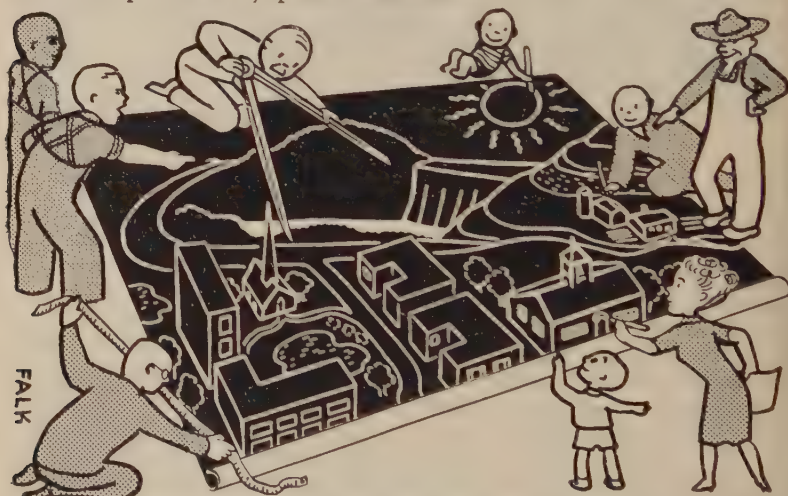
A Story Adapted from Barbara Wootton's Book, *Freedom Under Planning*, Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1945. Cartoons by Joy Falk; Text by K. Underwood.



1. The common man loves freedom as much as he wants a job. He is told by men such as Friedrich Hayek, author of *The Road to Serfdom*, that all planning is to be identified with dictatorship and that free competition and a hands-off policy by government are the source of freedom. But this system has brought the common man depressions, mass unemployment and insecurity. He wants no more of that kind of freedom. He wants to know if his only choice now is between hunger and serfdom. Barbara Wootton answers NO! Remember, she says, that we are talking about freedoms rather than freedom, and that freedoms are quite tangible and concrete. They include the opportunity to accept or reject a particular job, to enjoy the pleasure of comparing prices and qualities and spending money that is available to the limit of one's income, to express criticism of the government and its works, to form opposition political parties, etc. Freedom means the ability to choose alternatives. Planning will lead to slavery or freedom depending on how absolute the political power of the planners is, what kind of people exercise the power, and for what ends.



2. During the war we decided on the job that had to be done. We took thought as to the various choices for action and their result. And then we planned production accordingly. The heart of peacetime planning is this same conscious, deliberate choice of economic priorities by public authorities.



3. Planning is something quite flexible. It can eliminate certain freedoms (the wide open haggling in the market). It can alter some (set wage standards by legislation or industrial arbitration rather than by unconditional collective bargaining). It can leave others untouched (the right to replace one legislature by another). Or it can create some new ones (give a man a real choice of jobs).



4. If we are to plan without fear of slavery, we must be clear as to the dangers. Planning is not possible without power and that power in the hands of a president or a railroad guard is potential tyranny or potential freedom. But we take the risk every day in order to get things done. Centralization of power with democratic controls helps the public to fix responsibility more readily.



5. The war has taught us that if we are to have full employment, it will be possible only providing that the state is prepared directly

or indirectly to become an employer on a sufficiently large scale. If free enterprise cannot be induced without compulsion, for example, to build low cost houses for veterans, then the state must do a job that must be done.



6. Planning in America and England has been done and can be done within a tradition of freedom, among a people with moral passion for freedom. Those who plan will be subject to the control of the majority. Government boards that operated in wartime, such as Civilian Defense, Rationing and Draft boards, provide excellent local experience for peacetime democratic planning. Once a nation starts government planning it does not move inevitably to the totalitarian state. We saw what happened in Germany and Italy when a democratic government failed to plan democratically and eventually gave way to dictatorship that planned a well-fed and well-entertained slavery. Democratic planning is the next step in the economic evolution of the Western world—if that world is to give itself a chance to endure.

Good Reading on Planning—Pro and Con

- Drucker, Peter, *The Future of Industrial Man*, New York, John Day, 1942.
Finer, Herman, *Road to Reaction*, Boston, Little, Brown & Co., 1946.
Galloway, George B., *Planning for America*, New York, Henry Holt, 1941.
———, *Post-War Planning in U.S.*, New York, Twentieth Century Fund, 1945.
Hayek, Friedrich, *Road to Serfdom*, University of Chicago Press, 1944.
Laski, Harold J., *Will Planning Restrict Freedom?*, Cheam, England, Architectural Press, 1945.

Editors' Report to the Reader

Several months ago we wrote that we were conducting a survey so that we might know our readers a little better. We felt that we were giving satisfaction for we have one of the highest renewal rates in the publishing world. Ninety-two per cent of the people who subscribe to *Social Action* once, keep right on subscribing. And our circulation is the highest in the history of the magazine. But we wanted to know the social problems that readers were particularly concerned about, whether the articles seemed too difficult to read at times, and what they thought of our plans for future issues.

We sent out the questions by mail, expecting to receive around twenty per cent replies at the most. This figure is considered good by experts of magazine reader interest studies. We were convinced that we had one of the most loyal reader groups in America when over sixty per cent of the questionnaires were returned.

The returns that most interested us came from the names we sampled among our ex-subscribers. We have just been looking over our first thirty replies. Fourteen of the returns said they really had no reasons for quitting the magazine now that we brought the matter to their attention, and renewed their subscriptions. Three men said they just didn't have time to read *Social Action*. A Mr. M—, a business man in Salt Lake City, Utah, said that the best he could do these troubled days was scan the daily papers and read his mail, which sort of worries us.

Another ex-subscriber we worry about is the lady who found the articles too long to read. She would rather have "short, punchy articles." Now we have no aversion to short articles, but we do like an article, like a dress, to be long enough to cover the subject. We also have no objections to an article being punchy, so long as the author doesn't just think in slogans. Being a reform-minded publication, we get more than our share of manuscripts from people who have at last combined the secret of perpetual motion with a balanced budget, and we are just a little leary of articles that begin: "The only way to save. . . ."

We are pretty clear on why Mr. P—, formerly of the *Chicago Tribune* and the Hearst newspapers, doesn't like us. He has organized the *Let Live League* with the slogan that "only the foremost can help the

hindmost"* and is naturally suspicious of publications emanating from New York, since Chicago is the "positive pole of a new axis to be called World Federation." But Mr. P— is re-subscribing anyway. He wants to keep an eye on the opposition.

The nicest thing about the ex-subscribers who are extending again the right hand of fellowship are the letters they write to us. "Continue to pioneer," says Mr. S— of Oberlin, Ohio. "I enjoy a publication that stands for something." And Mrs. L— of Arkansas City, Kansas says she is sorry she missed the last two years when she sees from our publicity leaflet the writers we have had. Mrs. G— of Montgomery, Alabama, who had to stop *Social Action* because her husband died and she needed to cut corners, "thoroughly enjoyed us." Our "topics are timely," our "treatment of subjects is clear, concise and informative," our "criticisms are just," our "program constructive and Christian." We decided that anyone who was that good a friend should have a free subscription. Her editorial program is one that will always be our objective.



Chaplain A.M.S., just out of the services, wants *Social Action* to remain a "scholarly, informative and militant periodical. To be a religious *Survey Graphic* is not enough. Action demands an espousal of the truth even if it places religion on trial for its own shortcomings," says Chaplain S—. The chaplain's letter we treasure most says that the philosophy of *Social Action* "led me to devote my life to the South (my homeland) in an effort to further the movement of liberation." The magazine, he believes, has "performed miracles in helping me free myself from the chains of ignorance, prejudice and hate in the social realm."

Such letters make us want to tell you briefly the topics we are gathering information on now. The April number on a "National Farm Security Policy" will be written by David Burgess, Paul Sifton and

*This is one of the most interesting versions of the "what helps the rich helps you" philosophy we have seen.

Arthur Raper. It will explore the implications of increasing farm tenancy, the concentration of big farming operations, the waning importance of land ownership, and the fate of the family-size farm.

The May issue on "Social Evangelism" is a study of how the Protestant church can cut across class lines, of the strength and weakness of the personal, evangelical revival tradition, of the contributions of foreign missions and American experiments to an understanding of the influences of social, economic and religious factors on church membership.

In the June issue Eduard Lindemann seeks to answer the question: "Is the United States Going Left or Right?" What does all the talk about planned economy, stateism, and bureaucracy add up to in America?

Other topics on our schedule for consideration are: (1) "Why Congress Acts That Way" (the job facing Congress, its inherent difficulties, whom it actually represents, how get reform, etc.); (2) "Our Policy in Germany and Japan"; (3) "The Bible Speaks for a Social Faith"; (4) "A Handbook of Social Liturgy"; (5) "What are the Veterans Doing?" (a report on their status and opportunities in the various organizations competing for their loyalty); (6) "The Inflation Crisis"; (7) "Piety and Reaction"; (8) "The Fight for Food" (how the churches can help America meet its responsibilities for relief in Europe and Asia); (9) "Who Controls Your Mind?" (the cultural penetration tactics of the "me-first" boys, a study of ownership of pipe lines of opinion in America, a report on the religious press); (10) "They Started Something" (personality profiles of social strategists with religious resources); (11) "An Expose of America's Private Mental Institutions"; (12) "Protestant Sects and Old Line Churches"; (13) "A Youth Policy for the Church" (a critical survey of what's right and wrong with actual programs); (14) "The Church as an Employer."

This list was prepared with the aid of a scientific sample of our readers. You can have a great deal to say about the selection of future issues if you will write us of the social problems that concern you most. We are confident it will not be a dull year for the editors or the readers.

—KENNETH UNDERWOOD

Social Scene

Our age has rediscovered the unity of the social organism. Structurally we are one. A house is a spigot on the end of a water main that is the community, a switch at the terminal of the power and telephone lines that are our nerves of force and antennae of detection reaching out into the social body. A public utility strike quickly demonstrates the structural unity without which we perish.

Economically we are one. Let a depression hit the stock market and the share-cropper feels it in the decline of the price of cotton. Farm prices are dependent on labor income, industrial prosperity on agricultural.

Morally we are one. Let any country be infected with military ambition and the world is periled with the contagion of death. Let the missionary gospel issue from Boston and the face of the world is changed even unto Bombay. The only answer to atomic disintegration is the social integration of the world.

St. Paul elaborated this spiritual unity of mankind when he said, "We are all one body and severally members one of another." The Biblical epic describes the human story as a trek from a solitary experience in a garden to a social experience in a City of Ten Thousand Times Ten Thousand.

This is the ineradicable thesis of Christianity at work in the world and the base from which proceeds all social action.

Alfred W. Swan

SOCIAL ACTION INFORMATION

Council for Social Action
289 Fourth Avenue
New York 10, N. Y.

Dear Sirs: Please send a complete set of C.S.A. information, including one each of:

Washington Report
Wanted—Alert Christian Citizens
Guidebook
Promotion leaflets

Chart for Social Action
Study Guides
Together
Missions Council Brochure

Name

Street Address

City State